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MONDAY, APRIL 11, 1927

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WHOLE NO. 552

HOMER ON THE PHONE

A pleasant feeling came over me that evening as I drowsed through my favorite psychical journal, and read of a new depot in London for the facilitation of communication with the world beyond. I felt that the poor muddy vesture of decay to which my feeble ego had become inured by years of use was losing substance and weight. At the same time my surroundings grew dim, the airy nothing to which my fairly solid flesh had changed floated out into the circumambient ether, and I presently found myself at the new depot in a room furnished with telephones. As each of these had a sovereign-in-the-slot apparatus, and bore the name of some locality or big bonze in the world beyond, I saw that now at long last I might realise the dream of my life, to converse with my old friend Homer. In a rapture I inserted my sovereign below the label 'Hades', and got my connection.

My call was answered by Rhadamanthus, who asked somewhat crustily what I wanted 'at that time of night', but added more affably, when I explained, that Homer was away presiding at a Muses's Concert on Olympus, at which Phoebus himself was conducting as Musarchus. It must, however, be nearly over, and he would inform the poet by the Etheric Girdle which Puck had put round the Unseen in forty minutes—a famous and a record feat, he added—and Homer would no doubt return in a trice by one of the new Meteor Telepomps that Daedalus and Son had put upon the stand. I waited patiently till a resounding 'Hullo!', followed by a hemistich from the Iliad, 'Who might you be, my fine fellow?', apprised me that something great had swum into my ken. Mighty Homer was there, and in trembling I began.

Myself. I am a humble worshipper, one who believes you soar above others like an eagle, that you hold the scepter—

Homer. I seem to have heard this before. I will take it as said, if you will kindly come to the point.

M. I beg the favor of a short interview.

H. The Averting Apollo! From the Stunt Press of course? A plague on interviewers! Impudence is the badge of all your tribe. No, no! Good night!

M. Nay, great Maeonides, I am no professional intruder. Bear with me, and you will hear something to your advantage.

H. What! How? To my advantage?

M. I would correct some false impressions that are current about you. Listen, I entreat.

H. Well, well. But be brief, for dinner waits.

M. To begin with, are you one?

H. One? Now, by Pluto's Dog, it will be news to all the Greeks that there could be more than one Homer. Have you not read that after my birth Nature lay exhausted, and has never been in travail with my peer? You are insulting.

M. Be not so hasty, I beg! Others abide our question. You forget your own *mot* that anger waxeth

in a man's breast even as smoke. I assure you there are people who say you are a multitude.

H. I have heard I am myriad-minded, but myriad-bodied—who says I am?

M. It is written in books about The Rise of the Greek Epic.

H. I, I only, am the Greek Epic. What, in the names of all the gods at once, is meant by my rising? If I rose at all, I rose full-formed like Aphrodite from the sea.

M. Good! And like her you rose to universal dominion. But—another thing—it is said that your poetry was full of horrors and indecencies, and that it was purged by later generations.

H. That is what a bumptious person here named Pott would style unparalleled and unmitigated nonsense. My poems are as they always were.

M. I rejoice to hear there has been no cleaning up. I have often wondered how a purifying agency could have overlooked some of your scenes. The story of the Lame God, *mari peu complaisant*, trapping the light o' love Aphrodite and her *cicisbeo*, and that recital by Zeus to his own spouse of his many amours—the Leporello Catalogue we call it—were these quite suitable for the young person?

H. I admire this squeamishness in a world where, as we hear, the proceedings in Divorce Courts are not only published, but greatly relished. If man made his gods, and his goddesses too, in his own image, could I help it? As for your young persons, it is said down here that they know too much, and that Mrs. Grundy has resigned.

M. Then the puzzle of your name. There was, for instance, our own Joshua Barnes, who said *Homeros* was simply *Solomon* (or *Soremos*) reversed, and, as is the philological way, *diablement changé en route*. The latest discovery is that you were an Oriental, and that your name is the Assyrian *samaru*, or 'bard'.

H. I bore the name my parents gave me, and never troubled about it. Why should I? My poetry would smell sweet under any name.

M. No doubt of that. Then there was Horace's insinuation—*vinosus Homerus*, you remember?

H. I commended moderation in all things, wine included, as you ought to know from my poems. Any more slanders?

M. Nay, I meant no serious imputation. Myself, I agree with Eupolis that no man can be bad who is fond of the bottle. Aeschylus did his best work when the wine was in. But really I sometimes wonder about the wines of Greece, how any one could drink "deep" of the resinous, acidulated stuff. Some people are not surprised that Pindar said 'Water is best'.—Next we are told you were blind.

H. Ah, that was the buffoon Lucian. He ridiculed me for presuming to describe scenes in heaven when I could not see what happened on earth, and even called me a liar. But I got heavy damages for that in Minos's court, and Zeus, who had been lampooned by the same calumniator, and was glad to get back something of his own, upheld the judgment on appeal.

M. So of course you witnessed the Trojan War. I never credited that Pythagorean canard that you were a camel in Bactria at the time. One of our savants holds, on the basis of your wonderful surgical knowledge, that you were Head of the Medical Staff before Troy.

H. Fudge! I got my information, as your Shakespeare got his, from chronicles. You know that Phe-mios taught me letters. I did hate that condemned Cuneiform, and was well flayed, as we boys used to say, for my howlers, but, when the Cretan Script came in—the 'Nyoospelin' it was called in the Eteocretan patois—I made great progress. These were the baleful signs on Bellerophon's tablet in the Iliad—you remember?—, and I smile when your learned men prate about Kanekas and Ojibbeways, and their message-sticks, and wampum belts, and Heaven knows what not.

M. One more crux, please. Did you write both the Iliad and the Odyssey?

H. That is an impertinent question.

M. And that is—pardon me—an orgulous attitude. You cannot be aware of the full measure of the depravity of the Smashers, as our Frederic Harrison styled your enemies. In Germany especially a thousand and discords used to ring about you. The dissection of your *corpus sacrum* was a cult; everybody was doing it, and knew he was right, and was surprised that the cackle of his little bourg was not accepted as the murmur of the world. Of course, as Paul of Tarsus once said, they bit and devoured one another, but they also did you some harm. Not that your case is unique. According to our scholar Saintsbury, it was the task of the literati of Europe last century to prove that everybody's works were written by somebody else.

H. So I have heard. Shakespeare, who is the only poet with whom I can associate—

M. And Milton, so highly skilled to sing of Time and Eternity—surely you give him a seat near your throne?

H. Milton has merit, certainly. But then his subject! My Clay with long Oblivion is gone dry, but ah, the epic I could write even now if I had that splendid being, your modern Devil, for my hero! Well, Shakespeare tells me that some foolish people are ascribing his plays to a lawyer, Bacon I think he called him, but that must be a nickname. *Sus Minervam*, eh?

M. There are such farceurs, but most people say, He who puts Bacon where our Shakespeare sits, Must have unbaken brains or shaken wits. The paronomasia there will appeal to you?

H. There is better in my poems.

M. Your Noman joke was good, and the Pelian spear from Pelion, but a Frenchman is proving, with abundant sarcasm, that the fine word-play in your poems was foisted in by rhapsodes and redactors and other rascals, and that your boasted witticisms are *bouffonneries*, *bavardage*, *beautés fardées*, and what not.

H. All Hades shall stir for this! But, by Tisiphone, what fools some mortals be, and how short their memories! Is it forgotten how that angry ape Zoilus was served for abusing me? I cannot remember all the deaths he died, but I know he was hurled from the Scironian Cliff, crucified, burnt at Smyrna on a pyre built up of his own books, and—I think—pounded in a mortar. And it served him right. Like your Dr. Faustus he had a Damned Life and a Deserved Death. But I suppose the follies of your critics will continue to the last syllable of recorded time. I once heard a Frenchman say a fool can always find some bigger fool to admire him.

M. Quite so. *<Interruption by a great noise>*. But what hideous yells and hollow shrieks are these?

H. Pray let me recover. We have had a rare collieshangie. You remember Thersites? Well, he and Stentor have fallen out. He calls Stentor bourgeois and even aristocrat, saying he puts on airs because the God of War once assumed his form. Now this very morning Thersites had interrupted Nestor when Nestor was introducing a deputation to Pluto to obtain an improved supply of cooling drinks—modest quenchers, they were called by one Swiveller, who organised the

mission—, and a few minutes ago Stentor reviled the little Bolshie for insulting a man old enough to be his great-grandfather. Unfortunately he forgot that he was near the foot of the hill up which Sisyphus has to push a stone of some size. While they were wrangling, the huge round stone, as Pope says in a wretched travesty of my full-resounding verse, resulting with a bound thundered impetuous on, and bowled poor Stentor over, and you know from my Iliad what a noise he can make.

M. You said he could roar like fifty men, and now hearing is believing. Your fine hyperbole is fully justified.

H. Well, he will be more careful in future. Even a fool can be wise after the event, as I was the first to observe. Euripides tried to soothe him with that verse of Agathon's, 'Not Heaven itself upon the past hath power', but only made him so angry that he rushed up to Hercules to get his club and follow the tragedian, but you know the saying that it is as hard to take that hero's club from him as it is to appropriate one of my own verses. Well, it is all over, but the laughter, my own unquenchable, and not the fleshless variety that your poet speaks of, has done me good. It is really at times rather gloomy here. Even the scandal at the barber's, where we forgather in the forenoon *more Graeco*, is tinged with melancholy.

M. I know that you have always thought Hades a cheerless place, but do you properly appreciate your blessings? There are people up here who actually envy you, or pretend to. They long for sleep after toil, and the calm that earth's tumults cannot reach. I remember one who even declared he would hang himself to see Euripides, though he never did it.—But to resume, have you heard that a crank has made out that your *Odyssey* was written by a woman?

H. A woman? Destructive, damnable, de—. Oh! but this is the very ecstasy of ineptitude! I shall tell Ulysses, just to hear him laugh, when he returns from Leuke, where he is visiting the great Achilles, whom he knew. This is something, as Seneca would say, that one ought to know if one wants to know a lot.

M. Do so, but this insult is only one of many. Still, you are having on the whole a quiet time just now. It was not always so. Discussion would wax hot, and the disputants were anything but mealy-mouthed. For example, you must have met Byron? Well, one Jacob Bryant had said Troy never existed, and Byron called him a blackguard—no less—for his extravagant doubts. Even in these days experts shew temper.

H. I seem to have many enemies.

M. They have been in number as the leaves and the flowers in spring, but truth is prevailing and they grow fewer. Unfortunately falsehood, like Ate, is fleet of foot and had a good start. You have been proclaimed, à propos of your descriptions of the Achaeans world, a mere romancer, but that was by an Irishman. It is said that you invented your geography! The very home of Ulysses is not safe. Some say that by Ithaca you mean Leucadia.

H. Fiddlesticks! I knew Ithaca well. Mentor entertained me there when I was on my way to the Wild West to explore its marvels. I hear you have even now no Wonder Book like my *Odyssey*, and that your boys and girls love it, while your besotted crities mumble over it. I wish I had made it longer.

M. What, were there other adventures?

H. Many. If I were not so hungry, I could tell you how Ulysses came to the Cocqigrues and Glubdub-drib, and the Isle of Ruach, where the folk live on wind, and the Isle of Luggnagg, where they live for ever and long for a change, and the Isle of Satyrs, inhabited by red-haired men with tails. Later, he landed at the capital, named after one Holy St. Andrew, of a savage country called Scotia, where Charybdis is, you know; I believe they call it Corryvreckan now.

The people there wore only costumes of paint over their birthday suits, and were very wicked, and proud of their skill to make the foreigner pay: They stupefied Ulysses and his men with a vile drink called *wiski*, borrowed (as they put it) all their money to the last obol, and drove them forth. Luckily there was a beautiful fairy there, Ket Kennedy¹, who helped them on their way to Iberia, where they founded Lisbon. And so on. And then the sights they saw, Icarus making his famous (and final) nose-dive, the last fragment of Atlantis plunging beneath the waves, Deucalion's Ark tumbling, waterlogged, about the sea, and an older ark, of Hebrew make, stranded on Ararat, and—but I am digressing. And they say that I did not know Ithaca! Enough! Your age is shamed, the breed of noble bloods must have vanished from the earth, and I do not care a digamma for all your sons of Momus and whelps of Zenodotus.

M. The digamma! Tell me what dialect you spoke and where you lived. Smyrna, Knossos, Babylon, Egypt, and a score of other places claimed you. And Athens of course—her golden citizen she had the impudence to call you. Nowadays most favor Ionia.

H. Ionia? You mean over in the East? It was no part of my world. I was an Achaean, and enjoyed many a carouse in Mycenae the Golden, where the king and his thanes, to quote Pope's rococo stuff again, revelled in love-dittied air and dance and foaming wine. I had a glorious time wandering about from court to court, and always welcome. The world was young and fresh, and, except for a little fighting, which we generally had on hand, quiet and content. The weariness, the fever, and the fret your poet sings of seem to be a symptom of age. We feel it down here too. Ah me, me! Bear me back across the ages, To the years that are no more, Give me one sweet month of springtime On the old Saronic shore.—Yes, life's cup was nectar at the brink. And I gathered much experience as I roamed upon the breast of new-created earth—*mores multorum hominum vidi et urbes*, you know, and I think I enshrined it all in immortal verse.

M. You did, and your epics are admired as much as ever, even in these immelodious days, as one of our bards calls them. You would shudder at the gibberish that sells as poetry, though there is no soul of harmony in it, hidden or manifest. Philistines we have who would forget you and abolish Greek, and youths to whom that language is made a species of torture occasionally curse the day you were born, but you will not mind that. Our Prime Ministers are patronising you, and may make you the fashion—for a year or two, till a new fad is needed. But many fine spirits have spoken their love for you. There was Ronsard, who shut himself up with your epics, and charged his household that he was not at home, no, not if a god from heaven should call. And there was a sweet singer of our own, Andrew Lang, who said that, if he had to choose, he would keep you and let all other Greek literature go. "Troy holds us still", he sings in a beautiful poem about your Helen. I have read that in a new continent a thousand leagues beyond Calypso's Isle, they have among their towns 31 Troys, aye and 21 Homers. You like to hear all this? Is it, in your own phrase, sweeter than trickling honey?

H. It is not unpleasing.

M. Then farewell and sup well, Homer, and a thousand thanks, and pardon for keeping you from your meal. Command me to that grand old man, Ulysses. I fear me he is not now that strength which in old days moved earth and heaven. My humble respects to Nausicaa. May her beauty and her sweetness endure! To know her is to love her: surely the cestus of Aphrodite was hers.

H. But stay! You might at least tell me in what country you dwell.

¹No doubt the Kate Kennedy in whose honor an annual carnival is still held in a Scottish University.

M. Oh, it is in the far north, near your Laestrygonia, an undesirable region, very unlike your sunny south. The folk there are, as were your Boeotians of old, a butt for the jokes of their southern neighbors, at least for what pass as jokes: the southerner has little humor. His liveliest sallies are at his own stomach and his mother-in-law. And the weather!! The southerner says we have no climate here, but only a regular sequence of unpleasant conditions. We must admit that we are generally, as your Cimmerians were, 'shrouded in mist and cloud'. As used to be said of a place in Thrace that you knew, we enjoy eight months of severe cold and four of winter. At the present moment I am shiv....

'And then I woke'—and woke to find my fire out and the hot water jug icy to the touch. But I had had a crowded hour of glorious talk, and had achieved an experience that to the wisest of the Greeks was one of the boons that death would bring.

ST. ANDREWS, SCOTLAND

A. SHEWAN

TWO BOOKS ON THE OYDSSEY

I. Die Odyssee. By Eduard Schwartz. München: Hueber (1924). Pp. vi + 343.
 II. Homers Odyssee. Die Wiederherstellung des Ursprünglichen Epos von der Heimkehr des Odysseus nach dem Tageplan. Mit Beigaben Ueber Homeriche Geographie und Kultur. Von Wilhelm Dörpfeld. München: Buchenau und Reichert (1924). Pp. xv + 335; 11 Plates.

The books on the Odyssey by Messrs. Schwartz and Dörpfeld present conclusions drawn from a life-long intimacy with the Homeric Poems. Both authors are eminent in classical studies and both believe that the original elements of the Odyssey were far superior to the poem as we have it; in other words, they maintain that time has dealt harshly with this epic. But here the similarity ceases. Schwartz is a philologist, publishes his book in connection with a new text of the Odyssey, and bases his arguments largely on style and language. Dörpfeld's book, which accompanies a new prose translation by H. Rüter, deals rather with structural principles, as one might expect from the great illuminator of so many dark places in Greek architecture.

Schwartz, by his analysis of the poem (1-156), comes to the following conclusions. The present form of the Odyssey is due to a "Bearbeiter" (B), a rhapsode, rather than a poet, whose skill is shown, not in the writing of new verses, but in the use and the adaptation of old verses. His handling of the epic language betrays his locality and his date: he belongs to Athens and to the sixth century B.C. At the basis of the Bearbeiter's Odyssey lay three poems—two versions of the Return of Odysseus, and the Telemachy—composed by three different poets. The earliest of the three poets, a highly-gifted poet (O), began the tale of the Return with an account of the slaughter of the Sun-God's cattle. Not more than a generation later a second poet (K) retold the tale in rivalry with O. He knew the greater part of the Iliad, but neither the Games nor Book 24. Less gifted than O, he was a

better literary architect, and secured a greater unity by the introduction of Calypso and the wrath of Poseidon. He was later than Hesiod, and lived during the middle or the last part of the seventh century. The third poet (T), who knew the whole Iliad, including the Doloneia, wrote the Telemachy about 600 B. C., making the son of Odysseus the central figure. He was a good poet, but lacked depth of feeling. The work of these three poets, O, K, and T, was supplemented and transformed before it came into the hands of the Bearbeiter. One poet (F) amplified the Apologue, adding the Laestrygonians and Circe, who are doublets of the Cyclopes and Calypso; another (L), who seems to have been trying to improve on the poet of the Telemachy, contributed large portions which are now included in the second part of the Odyssey. F and L belong to the same period, the decline of epic poetry; they are very likely the same poet. The tale of Odysseus was now completed. Unfortunately, it suffered a reworking by the scissors-and-paste rhapsode, B. The Bearbeiter cared little for unity. He worked for a more popular audience. Taste had changed; the epic story was now treated rather as history. B composed Book 1, including the present proem, introduced the second assembly of the gods, in Book 5, prolonged the stay of Telemachus at Sparta, and changed the close of the poem.

The second part of Schwartz's book (159-297) brings together the work of each of the four poets, O, K, T, and FL, and suggests reconstructions of the portions of their work which were discarded by the Bearbeiter. To this are added about 30 pages of remarks on the text. A short Appendix, on Ithaca, concludes the book. There is no Index.

Dörpfeld finds the origin of our Odyssey in a single poem composed at Pylus by a poet of the twelfth century B. C., the bloom of the epic, after development by court bards for many centuries. This poet located his heroes' adventures geographically with great accuracy, and timed the action of the poem 'as though with his watch in his hand'. In his Return of Odysseus he described the action of ten consecutive days, in ten lays, each lay containing, as it were, a poetic diary of events in the lives of the chief characters. Thus the first seven lays described not only the journey of Telemachus to Sparta and back, but also the adventures of Odysseus from Calypso's isle to the hut of Eumeus. In this original poem Odysseus spent one day, instead of three, in building the raft, and one day, not seventeen, in sailing from Ogygia—which was Cape Iapygia, at the southeastern end of Italy—to Scheria, and he spent less time with Alcinous, as well as with Eumeus, than he does in our present Odyssey. Into this scheme of ten consecutive days of action Dörpfeld fits the movements of the Suitors, Penelope, and Athena. Athena is busy on each of the ten days. She is apparently idle on the seventh day, but only apparently; in reality she assumes the guise of the seer Theoclymenus, in order to accompany Telemachus on his

return voyage. She does not appear in the Apologue, but this is a later addition to the poem.

This reconstruction of the Return of Odysseus is in direct opposition to Zielinski's generally accepted theory that the Homeric poet does not, except in rare and unimportant cases, describe two actions as occurring at the same time. Dörpfeld goes to some length (160-189) to refute this theory. Supplementary chapters deal with the number of the Suitors—which Dörpfeld reduces to 20 (190-204); with Homeric geography (205-269); with the Homeric palace (270-303); and with the art of the age which Homer describes (304-325). Dörpfeld is practically alone, with all the archaeologists against him, in regarding 'Mycenean' art as 'Old-Phoenician', and in seeing this art hold a continuous sway, uninterrupted by the 'Geometric' period, down to classic Greek art.

Dörpfeld's ingenious reduction of the Odyssey to a new kind of symmetry may seem from this brief summary to be very complicated and elaborate. It is easily grasped, however, because of the remarkable clarity of language, for which its author has always been distinguished. Dörpfeld has never attacked a problem in classical studies without clarifying it, and rarely without offering some new and often surprising solution. But his theory of the original form of the Odyssey is not likely to be accepted, for it is based on two highly improbable assumptions: (1) that a great poet in the early epic period gave to place and to time such minute attention that he would be likely to construct an accurate diary of events in composing a complete and unified poem; (2) that, supposing this were so, an inferior poet disjointed and rearranged this work of art, and did it so successfully that his poem drove out even the memory of the greater work.

The theory of Schwartz seems, on general principles, to be equally improbable. It appears to be unlikely, not to say impossible, that not far from the time when Terpander, Callinus, and Archilochus were establishing their names firmly in the history of poetry, three great epic poets could have lived and produced great poems, and yet have left not a single trace of their personality or of their work in literary tradition.

The insurmountable obstacle to the acceptance of this or that theory of the origin of the Homeric Poems is the lack of data out of which can be constructed a canon or norm for the early Greek epic. There is no standard with which the critic can compare the poems. Homer contains his own norm, and this appears different to different eyes. One group of critics finds the outstanding thing in Homer in unity, rhythm, completeness; another finds it in contradiction, variety, imperfection. According to the eye and the focus the view of Homer is determined, and there are countless different views. But the more one becomes acquainted with theories, old and new, of the composition of either poem, the less do they seem to add anything of lasting value to our knowledge of the poet and his poetry.

UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

SAMUEL E. BASSETT

REVIEWS

A Poetic Calendar, Edited by Robert Bell Burke. Privately Printed: Philadelphia (1925). Pp. 76.

In the year 1580 (the Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie says 1589) M. John Dinckel, Professor of Hebrew and Dialectics in the Academy of Erfurt, published a book written in Latin and designed to show how dates may be expressed in Latin verse with reference to the rising or the setting of some star. The work was arranged by days, beginning January 1. For each day a poetic quotation was given—sometimes, more than one—in Latin, of course. A selection from this work has been published by Dean R. B. Burke of the University of Pennsylvania, as a University of Pennsylvania dissertation. Dean Burke has given the poetry for January only; he does not say why.

The book as edited falls into two parts: an astronomical treatise, and the Poetic Calendar for January. The former, printed in translation, is interesting chiefly as showing how slowly the Copernican theories made headway; Copernicus had been dead nearly half a century, but Dinckel begins gravely with the nine spheres of Ptolemy. Perhaps it is worth while noting here that, thirty years or so later, the learned Dr. Donne was hardly reconciled to the new views when he wrote

"The new philosophy calls all in doubt,
The element of fire is quite put out".

The Calendar proper—and here both the Latin and Dean Burke's satisfactory translation are given—contains citations from Vergil and other great classic poets, but sixteenth century poetasters are more often quoted. Most of these the editor has been able to identify, but Josephus a Pinu, though cited more than seventy times, proves mysterious. Was his name Dupin, perhaps? Was he a friend of Dinckel? It seems likely; but Dr. Burke has wisely refrained from speculation. Josephus a Pinu was not in any case a good poet!

Inasmuch as this Calendar is not in the British Museum, it might have been worth while to print the whole of the text, though it must in any case remain a tidbit for the curious.

BROWN UNIVERSITY

BEN C. CLOUGH

The Vita Merlini, Translated and Edited by John Jay Parry. The University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature, Vol. x, No. 3. Urbana: The University of Illinois Press (1925). Pp. 138. \$1.50.

The publication of the Vita Merlini makes a worthy addition to an excellent series. It consists of the Latin text as found in MS. Cotton Vespasian E iv. of the British Museum, with a Preface, Translation, and Notes. Professor Parry has given an exact reprint of the Vita, except that he has expanded abbreviations, putting in smaller type the letters he has supplied—a useful device. He has added, in footnotes, a complete critical apparatus, and has given in italics the readings which

other editors have evolved without manuscript authority.

A considerable portion of the Preface is given to a summary of the reasons for and against the attribution of the poem to Geoffrey of Monmouth. Professor Parry conducts the argument very fairly and sums up undogmatically, establishing, it seems to me, a strong presumption in favor of Geoffrey's authorship.

There is a careful and rather comprehensive account of sources. The editor sensibly remarks, as apology for abbreviating this section, "Much of the natural philosophy used by Geoffrey in this poem was such a commonplace in the Middle Ages that it is difficult to determine which of the many possible sources he actually made use of". These words contain a moral overlooked in too many a Seminar.

The translation is generally very satisfactory. Occasionally, however, one finds an eccentric rendering such as "opulent Regulator" for *moderator opimus*, but Professor Parry has solved most of the puzzles in the text, and his notes are numerous and helpful.

The passage on page 115, in which Merlin's sister Ganieda utters a prophecy, is interesting both historically and otherwise. I conjecture that the two moons, the two lions, and the two men of her vision represent the double vision of madness as depicted in ancient literature. Professor O'Brien-Moore has pointed out¹ that "the madness of mantic inspiration" is characterized, as other madness is, by this symptom. Thus, e.g., Seneca's Cassandra sees two suns and a double Thebes.

The English translation is in itself a readable narrative, and gives us edifying samples of medieval legend and pseudo-science.

BROWN UNIVERSITY

BEN C. CLOUGH

The Eclogues of Antonio Geraldini. Edited, With Introduction and Notes, by Wilfred P. Mustard. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press (1924). Pp. 84.

I take pleasure in welcoming to the ranks of the available publications of fifteenth century Latin literature the fourth volume in Professor Mustard's scholarly series, Studies in the Renaissance Pastoral. The Eclogues of Antonio Geraldini are twelve in number. As the editor demonstrates, they show marked Ovidian influence. Written in six weeks, these smooth and facile compositions of a cultured priest and diplomat bear witness to the universal command of literary Latin in the fifteenth century. When one considers the multifarious uses to which the Latin language was put long after it ceased to be any one's cradle-tongue, how ridiculous it is to speak of Latin as a dead language! Count no language dead until it is lost and forgotten.

The subject-matter of these Eclogues is the Christian story. Though they are conventional and belong to the category of the pseudo-bucolic, there is a certain degree of appropriateness in the pastoral setting of the first three: the Nativity, the Adoration of the

¹In his dissertation, *Madness in Ancient Literature*, 228 (Weimar, R. Wagner Sohn, 1924).

Magi, and the search for Jesus by Joseph and Mary on the occasion of the dispute with the Doctors in the Temple. The remaining poems, on such subjects as the Eucharist, the Passion, the Resurrection, and the Day of Judgment, are less happily associated with the pastoral form.

The elasticity of the new requirements of the College Entrance Examination Board may lead to opportunities for including selections from neo-classical Latin in the curriculum of the Secondary Schools, in which case Professor Mustard's series will supply interesting material.

HAVERFORD COLLEGE

DEAN P. LOCKWOOD

Historische Griechische Grammatik. I. Lautlehre.
Sammlung Göschen, No. 117. Von E. Kieckers.
Berlin und Leipzig: Walter de Gruyter and Company (1925). Pp. 134.

It is not altogether clear for whom Professor Kieckers's little book, *Historische Griechische Grammatik*, is intended. The Introduction (7-20) is elementary enough for readers without a knowledge of Greek. For example, the alphabet is tabulated and explained precisely in the manner of a School Greek Grammar.

A large part of the book (21-42, 61-85) is devoted to the comparison of the Greek phonetic system with that of the other Indo-European languages. The treatment is briefer, but scarcely clearer, than that in the larger Comparative Grammars. It is quite over the head of any person who has not a good command of Greek and some acquaintance with Indo-European grammar. Those who can understand it will want more detail and references to the literature.

The remaining pages (43-60, 86-131) do for Greek much what Max Niedermann's *Précis de Phonétique Historique du Latin* (Paris, 1906)¹ has done so well for Latin; they describe the phonetic changes within Greek itself. Whatever the intention of the author, this part of the book seems to the reviewer by far the most important. If the other sections had been omitted and these had been expanded and clarified in Niedermann's manner, Professor Kieckers would have given us a very useful book.

The author's name is sufficient guaranty of the general soundness of the doctrine presented. I have noticed only a few unimportant slips, which were doubtless caused by haste in composition. For example, it is stated (22-23) that *v* came to be pronounced *s* toward the end of the first century A. D. This change probably did not occur until the ninth or the tenth century, as Professor Kieckers himself says on page 29.

YALE UNIVERSITY

E. H. STURTEVANT

A History of the Pharaohs. Volume I, The First Eleven Dynasties. By Arthur Weigall. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company (1925). Pp. xv + 328. 17 Plates.

We have become so accustomed by the spade of the

¹See THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 7.199-200.

archaeologist to new finds in Egypt that the appearance of another history of the rulers of that much-explored country is to be taken as a matter of course. Mr. Weigall's book, *A History of the Pharaohs*, the first of a series of volumes that will probably extend to four, is peculiarly a product of the modern study of ancient history, since it is based upon a thorough and intimate acquaintance with the most recent finds, the topography and the social life of the country, as well as the written sources, both literary and epigraphical.

The contents are as follows:

- I. An Introductory Study of Early Egyptian Annals, King-Lists, Chronology and Calendar Dates (1-77); II. The Historic Period Before the First Dynasty, 5500-3408 B. C. (78-101); III. The First Dynasty, 3407-3144 B. C. (102-124); IV. The Second Dynasty, 3143-2888 B. C. (125-144); V. The Third Dynasty, 2887-2790 B. C. (145-163); VI. The Fourth Dynasty, 2789-2716 B. C. (164-189); VII. The Fifth Dynasty, 2715-2588 B. C. (190-217); VIII. The Sixth Dynasty, 2587-2453 B. C. (218-252); IX. The Seventh and Eighth Dynasties, 2452-2272 B. C. (253-262); X. The Ninth and Tenth Dynasties, 2271-2197 B. C. (263-284); XI. The Eleventh Dynasty, 2271-2112 B. C. (285-321); Index (322-328).

The Preface to the work intimates that the author has discovered a new approach to this old theme (xi-xii):

Most Egyptologists seem to take the view that the mechanism of their study is, in a manner of speaking, the secret of their calling, and is beyond the range of interest of the general reader, who, it is thought, desires only to look at the final picture, right or wrong; and hence, of the two best known histories of Egypt, the thoughtful study by Professor Breasted is very definitely written for the layman, most of the arguments therefore being omitted, the obscure periods passed over, and the controversial subjects avoided, while the painstaking work by Professor Petrie is entirely for the student, a useful compilation of facts and figures being all that is aimed at.

In my opinion, however, there is no cause for this extreme difference in the methods of presentation. In the first place, I think that Egyptological discussion can, and should, be made intelligible to the ordinary reader, the sources of information made easily available, and the difficulties and stumbling-blocks made apparent, so that there may be as many amateurs at work as there are in other fields of art and science; and, in the second place, I believe that the ordinary reader, if interested at all, is generally glad to apply his brains to the little puzzles which confront the historian, and has no wish to be presented with a picture of Egyptian history the correctness of which he is asked to take on trust. In a word, I regard neither the public as dolts nor Egyptologists as magicians; and in this book my object is to write a consecutive story which will be intelligible and readable to the layman who has no particular knowledge of Egyptology, and which, at the same time, will aid both him and the actual student in a closer study of the subject.

Now this is all very interesting, but it does not, I am afraid, give a true conception of the nature of the book. Mr. Weigall has, probably with good reason, adopted the annalistic method, and it is therefore, in the mind of the reviewer at least, extremely likely that the general reader will regard his volume as belonging rather to the category of Professor Petrie's work than to that of Professor Breasted's. Moreover, I shall be much surprised if any one but the specialist find the

complications of the Egyptian calendar, which Mr. Weigall expounds in his first chapter (1-77), easy or profitable reading. So, too, the following paragraph (59) is misleading in its plausible, even attractive, statement of method:

...In this first volume I shall deal separately with every Pharaoh known to us down to the end of the Eleventh Dynasty, endeavouring, wherever possible, to interpret the material in such a way that each king takes on some semblance of reality, and no period remains wholly obscure. It is my contention that each fact is dependent on other facts, and that therefore each difficulty must be faced, and each detail employed in building up the general structure; for if one passes lightly over the more obscure ages, dismissing them in a few words, as Egyptologists are so often inclined to do, not only is the significance, I might indeed say the majesty, of the great pageant diminished, but also one is likely to lose the thread of the story and to be led into numerous small errors.

It is perhaps lamentable, but it is also true, that any historian is at the mercy of his sources, and that he must expand or contract his narrative according to the caprice of the extant recorded facts. Carefully considered, this statement of the function of the historian is either a truism or nonsense.

Of his vivid and interesting style readers acquainted with Mr. Weigall's previous work will not need much proof. I quote as a sample (82) this statement of the dawn of Egyptian history:

The archaeologist who, by means of some discovery of the actual relics of the age of Menes, the traditional founder of the Pharaonic line, suddenly opens the door upon the early history of the Nile Valley, finds himself, to his great surprise, staring at a civilization in full swing, and at a court which seems to be enjoying the culture of a life already matured in wealth and power. He is like a man who has come late to the play, and beholds before him the great spectacle of the Second Act, but does not know what has gone before, except in so far as the bald and brief statements upon his programme can serve to enlighten him. The excavator unearths the fragmentary records of the ages around the time of Menes, and thinks at first that he is about to reach the beginnings of Egyptian history; but soon he finds that the new material reveals not only its own antiquity, its great remoteness from the present day, but also the antiquity of the civilization which produced it, its own remoteness from the real beginning.

With this may be compared an account, brilliant and graphic, but too long to be quoted here, of the building of the pyramids (167-171), or the amusing narrative of the Pharaoh Piop Neferkere, the caravan-master Herkhuf, and the dancing dwarf (240-242). In fact, one becomes aware occasionally of too much vivifying on the part of this energetic and facile writer. His eagerness to reconstruct the history of doubtful periods is aided by an active imagination, and the book is full of inferences, suggestions, and hypotheses, which may well be contradicted by the next piece of archaeological evidence to be unearthed. I take as a slight example this (100):

At the foot of this scene there is a record of the king's captures in some unnamed campaign: 120,000 prisoners, 400,000 oxen, and 1,420,000 goats....

Surely the most conservative of critics would not allow such figures to go unquestioned, but Mr. Weigall continues, "which shows that this was no simple

victory, but an utter annihilation of a whole people". Then this "utter annihilation" is made the basis for a further deduction:

...The memory of it must have remained in men's minds for generations, and in this fact I am inclined to see the origin of the sinister reputation of the city of Heracleopolis in later times, when it was spoken of as the place at which the sun-god set about the destruction of mankind....

Finally, the whole argument is disqualified by the admission, "though, as I shall explain on page 143, this tradition may equally well have had its origin in the wars of the Second Dynasty..." It would have been better to omit the whole matter.

The volume ends (318-321) with another very dubious example of elaborate inference. The Biblical accounts of Abraham and Sarah and of Joseph are entirely reconstructed, with the result, according to the author (321), that the Egyptian chronology

...which I hope I have fully established in the present volume has served to confirm the narrative of the Hebrew Patriarchs as related in the Bible, and has given at last a satisfactory date to the events in these sacred old stories which have been read and re-read by our fathers, and will be read by our children for generations to come.

It is hard not to be indignant at the clever, but specious, argument by which Mr. Weigall builds up this revision of the Old Testament account, which will be convincing to the hasty reader, but will strike the serious student as purely sensational. After saying (318),

I suppose all critics will now admit that the great ages of Abraham and his wife Sarah, as recorded in Genesis, are fanciful; and I may therefore be allowed to tell the Biblical story as it more probably happened

he proceeds to quote the Bible and the Talmud indifferently as accurate or nearly accurate or entirely wrong. Among the data used to sustain his elaborate and ingenious argument (320-321) are the following. According to the Bible, Isaac was 40 years old when he married, and Joseph at the time of his appointment as Vizier to Pharaoh was 30; by the Talmud there were allowed 20 years' mourning for Joseph, an age of 100 years for Isaac, 430 years for the sojourn of the Israelites, 190 years before the oppression. Surely the most obvious inference is that these are rough or schematic dates and are altogether unreliable for accurate chronology. And yet Mr. Weigall comes to the conclusion, which, no doubt, he intended to be startling (320).

All these figures show that the events recorded in the Bible and their chronological sequence are perfectly probable, and it is clear that we are dealing with facts....

The point of central interest and by far the most important feature of this volume is Mr. Weigall's treatment of chronology. The basis of this is a reconstruction of the annals of which the Palermo Stone and its companion piece, the Cairo Fragment, are the only extant portions. By a series of shrewd guesses and inferences, checked by the Turin Papyrus and occasionally by Manetho, Mr. Weigall has evolved a system which seems to justify the claim (56) that his ...reconstruction of the Palermo Stone Annals has

now given a definite length to every reign and every dynasty for the first 750 years or so of Egyptian history, in place of the vague guessing in which we were obliged to indulge in the past . . .

That this system is still not absolutely accurate will be clear from a very curious error into which Mr. Weigall has fallen. He reckons the Sothic Cycle throughout (23-29) as 1460 years, that is to say, he assumes the loss of one day in every four years, or of one-quarter of a day per year. Now as a matter of fact the difference between the calendar year and the actual solar year is exactly 5 hours, 48 minutes, 48 seconds, or .24222, not one-quarter, of a day. To determine the degree of inaccuracy in his reckoning of the length of the Cycle, therefore, we may divide the number of days in a year by these two figures, and we then discover that the Cycle is not, as he claims, 1460 years (i. e. 365 divided by .25), but 1506 years and about 11 months (i. e. 365 divided by .24222). This will require considerable readjustment of the details of Mr. Weigall's chronological scheme. Nevertheless, its fundamental value is not seriously impaired, and it seems to lay a very definite foundation for a revised system of Egyptian chronology.

The best part of the argument here is the proof that the Annals are synchronized according to calendar years, not according to accession years, that is to say, each year is a unit beginning and ending on a fixed date in the calendar, and not on the generally unknown, date of the king's accession (20-26). A second praiseworthy feature is the refutation of the unreasonable and occasionally absurd system of Flinders Petrie (57). Another is the interesting proof (57) "that the list of kings in the Turin Papyrus is absolutely correct, and that Manetho's figures are hopelessly wrong . . ." In view of this categorical statement about the value of Manetho, however, one feels some doubt as to the accuracy of Mr. Weigall's treatment when he accepts that much-abused chronicler's figures in the absence of other confirming or contradictory data (e. g. 5). Still another interesting result of this chronological reconstruction is an ingenious suggestion of a revised dating according to seasons (58). The final result of Mr. Weigall's labor is the elaboration of a new chronology (46) beginning with the establishment of the Dynasty of Lower Egypt in 5507 B. C. As I suggest above, this scheme will be subject to certain changes of detail, but a comparison between it and the corresponding chronological table in the Cambridge Ancient History (1.173) will show how important most of this revision is.

Beside this new information on chronology, there are several other points of interest to which attention should be called. The following account of the origin of Egyptian civilization seems to me well worth quoting here (92-93):

To sum up the foregoing pages, we may say that the two earliest kingdoms known to us were that of the Hornet-kings of Lower Egypt and that of the Reed-kings of Eheninsi and Memphis; and that men of the same race had probably pushed on into the territory south of the latter kingdom, displacing and scattering

the Set-tribes who may have held the land before them. Then, it seems, there had come the conquering Hawk-tribes, whose original home may have been in the land of Pount; and these people had settled themselves beyond the southern frontier of the Reed-kings. Next, another dynasty, which had possibly entered the Nile Valley from the Oasis of El Khârgeh, had taken on, by conquest and perhaps by marriage, the royal prerogatives of the Hawks, and had established themselves at Theni; and meanwhile there were the sun-worshippers from the east who had founded the city of On. Thus, at the dawn of history, the inhabitants of Egypt in general reveal their mixed origin: there were the northerners of the Delta, who themselves were of Asiatic descent in the east and Libyan descent in the west; there were the settlers at On, who were of Bedouin origin; there were the southerners who had come in part from Somaliland or Pount; there were the men of Theni; and finally there were the powerful Set-tribes, perhaps of Libyan stock.

Again, there is a very praiseworthy stress on the early dynasties (164):

. . . In the early days of Egyptological study the mighty pyramids of Gizeh and the great Sphinx, which are the famous monuments of the Fourth Dynasty, seemed to be a sort of starting-point for Egyptian history, and not very much was known about the Pharaohs of earlier times, who, therefore, were called archaic and were thought to be almost legendary. Now, however, there is a very considerable amount of information available in regard to the First and Second Dynasties; and with the Third it will have been seen that we are already in the great age . . .

A feature of the work which will be interesting to the general reader is the inclusion of frequent quotations from the sources (e. g. 211, 235, 272-278, *et passim*).

Despite the criticisms which I have found it necessary to record above, the volume really is a valuable piece of constructive scholarship, and will make available both to the general reader and to the student a very considerable amount of material well arranged for reference. Mr. Weigall unquestionably has an intimate acquaintance with the archaeological evidence, and if at times this acquaintance, coupled with his annalistic method, leads him to write pages which are mere collections of data and therefore difficult for his "ordinary reader", that is perhaps inevitable. The book is attractively printed, and the proofs were read with care. I have noted very few errors. On page 80, in the sentence, "A short distance below this point <Heliopolis>, near the modern Cairo, the narrow valley, today termed Upper Egypt, suddenly opened out into the wide fields of Lower Egypt, called by the Greeks the Delta", the word 'above' would be more accurate than "below", inasmuch as Cairo is south (i. e. upstream) of Heliopolis. On page 110, in the sentence, "At the death of Mene he <Athothi> was accepted, however, by the Upper Egyptians as the new Hawk, the sovereign of the Upper and Lower countries, but only reluctantly acknowledged by the men of the Delta, who regarded him as a foreigner, the son of that old Hawk from the south, Ohe Mene, who had ruled them from the city of Memphis, which was beyond their northern frontier", for "northern" read "southern".

WASHINGTON SQUARE COLLEGE, CASPER J. KRAMER, JR.
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY